



COLRAIN

Franklin County



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NARRATIVE

Narrative

The Town of Colrain abuts the Vermont state line several miles northwest of Greenfield, the northern terminus of the Connecticut River Valley, and just north of the Mohawk Trail. It was settled by Scots-Irish immigrants in the mid-17th century who named their settlement after Lord Coleraine of northern Ireland.

Once known for its apples, and its sheep and dairy farms, Colrain, like all the hilltowns of Western Massachusetts, has seen the decline of its agricultural base. Today, a half-dozen dairy farms, two commercial orchards and several specialty or niche farms (raising llamas, angora goats and organic produce) are the only ones remaining. However, despite the widespread loss of manufacturing jobs throughout the Commonwealth, a cotton bleachery and a cotton products factory provide employment for many townspeople.

Many craftspeople and artists, attracted by the fact that the town offers privacy but also access to nearby college communities for marketing and supplies, have built or purchased homes and studios in Colrain.

Revitalization of the town's major center at the junction of two tourist routes to Vermont is being actively pursued by the newly formed Colrain Business Association, which also sponsors the annual Coleraine Village Fair in September. Two of the town center's churches are currently being restored, one as a community cultural center, the other as a retail and studio shop.

A substantial portion of the town's current budget of \$1.7 million is used to fund three school districts. There are 85 miles of road, of which about half are paved.

(Narrative supplied by community)



GEOGRAPHY

Location

Northwestern Massachusetts, bordered by Halifax, Vermont, on the north; Leyden on the east; Greenfield and Shelburne on the south; Charlemont on the southwest corner; and Heath on the west. Colrain is 17 miles northwest of Greenfield and 112 miles northwest of Boston.

Total Area: 43.45 sq. miles

Land Area: 43.38 sq. miles

Population: 1,757

Density: 41 per sq. mile

Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(Cummington Hill Station)

Normal temperature in January.....19.9°F

Normal temperature in July.....67.3°F

Normal annual precipitation.....46.0"

U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

Colrain, Heath, Bernardston

Regional Planning Agency

Franklin County

Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)



GOVERNMENT

Municipal Offices

Main Number: (413) 624-3454

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Open Town Meeting

Year Incorporated

As a town: 1761

Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%	
Total Registered	1,086		
Democrats	204	18.8	%
Republicans	142	13.1	%
Other parties	0	0.0	%
Unenrolled Voters	740	68.1	%

Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



DEMOGRAPHICS

Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000

Geographic Area: Colrain town, Franklin County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	1,813	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	1,813	100.0
Male.....	921	50.8	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	18	1.0
Female.....	892	49.2	Mexican.....	5	0.3
Under 5 years.....	116	6.4	Puerto Rican.....	7	0.4
5 to 9 years.....	134	7.4	Cuban.....	1	0.1
10 to 14 years.....	155	8.5	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	5	0.3
15 to 19 years.....	135	7.4	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	1,795	99.0
20 to 24 years.....	67	3.7	White alone.....	1,772	97.7
25 to 34 years.....	219	12.1	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	339	18.7	Total population.....	1,813	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	263	14.5	In households.....	1,813	100.0
55 to 59 years.....	95	5.2	Householder.....	686	37.8
60 to 64 years.....	68	3.8	Spouse.....	379	20.9
65 to 74 years.....	124	6.8	Child.....	573	31.6
75 to 84 years.....	79	4.4	Own child under 18 years.....	449	24.8
85 years and over.....	19	1.0	Other relatives.....	63	3.5
Median age (years).....	37.8	(X)	Under 18 years.....	32	1.8
18 years and over.....	1,310	72.3	Nonrelatives.....	112	6.2
Male.....	662	36.5	Unmarried partner.....	52	2.9
Female.....	648	35.7	In group quarters.....	-	-
21 years and over.....	1,265	69.8	Institutionalized population.....	-	-
62 years and over.....	269	14.8	Noninstitutionalized population.....	-	-
65 years and over.....	222	12.2	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	108	6.0	Total households.....	686	100.0
Female.....	114	6.3	Family households (families).....	478	69.7
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	231	33.7
One race.....	1,797	99.1	Married-couple family.....	379	55.2
White.....	1,783	98.3	With own children under 18 years.....	177	25.8
Black or African American.....	6	0.3	Female householder, no husband present.....	65	9.5
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	-	-	With own children under 18 years.....	36	5.2
Asian.....	6	0.3	Nonfamily households.....	208	30.3
Asian Indian.....	2	0.1	Householder living alone.....	163	23.8
Chinese.....	-	-	Householder 65 years and over.....	66	9.6
Filipino.....	2	0.1	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	255	37.2
Japanese.....	-	-	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	167	24.3
Korean.....	2	0.1	Average household size.....	2.64	(X)
Vietnamese.....	-	-	Average family size.....	3.12	(X)
Other Asian ¹	-	-	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-	Total housing units.....	776	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	686	88.4
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	90	11.6
Samoa.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander ²	-	-	occasional use.....	27	3.5
Some other race.....	2	0.1	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	4.5	(X)
Two or more races.....	16	0.9	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	1.8	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one			HOUSING TENURE		
or more other races: ³			Occupied housing units.....	686	100.0
White.....	1,799	99.2	Owner-occupied housing units.....	574	83.7
Black or African American.....	8	0.4	Renter-occupied housing units.....	112	16.3
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	10	0.6	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.71	(X)
Asian.....	7	0.4	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.28	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-			
Some other race.....	7	0.4			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

¹ Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

² Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

³ In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Home Sales (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

Subsidized Housing Units (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

Public Housing Units (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State: 0

Conventional Federal: 0

Rental Assistance(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP): 0

Federal (Section 8): 0



TRANSPORTATION

TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

The major axes of transportation in Franklin County, where Colrain is located, are Route 2, and I-91, which follows the Connecticut River. The region is well-served by rail. The Springfield Terminal Railway lines (the former Boston and Maine Railroad) parallel the two major highways, and the Central Vermont Railway's main line passes N-S through the eastern portion of the county.

Major Highways

The principal highway is State Route 112, which runs N-S between Vermont and cross-state Route 2 in neighboring Shelburne. U.S. Route 5 and Interstate 91 are easily accessible in Greenfield.

Rail

There is no passenger or freight rail service in Colrain, but the network of intermodal facilities serving Massachusetts is easily accessible.

Bus

Colrain is a member of the Franklin Regional Transit Authority (FRTA). There is no fixed route service. The FRTA provides paratransit services for the elderly and disabled through GMTA and the Shelburne Council on Aging.

Other

The Turners Falls Municipal Airport, a General Aviation (GA) facility, is easily accessible. It has a 3,013'x75' asphalt runway. Instrument approaches available: Non-precision.



CULTURE AND RECREATION

LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

None

RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

Recreational Facilities (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



MISCELLANEOUS

HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

Hospitals

None

Long Term Care

None

Hospices

None

Rest Homes

None

UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.